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has paid sums of 3,000 dollars and more for fine *sang-de-bœuf* porcelain. Mr. J. W. Ellsworth has a ruby red worth 5,000 dollars among his fine collection. Mr. M. J. Perry paid 5,000 dollars for a *rose du Barry* in the Dana sale. Tall black enamel hawthorn blossom vases fetch from 2,000 to 5,000 dollars, according to their perfection.

A collector of clocks—of which he boasts that he has one hundred and fifty-seven, all good time-keepers—gave \$5,100 for an ebony and bronze clock of the period of Louis XIV.; and at the same sale a *bric-a-brac*ist paid \$1,400 for a tapestry screen of Gobelin manufacture, and half that amount for a bottle of gray stoneware enamelled with blue and gray. A Hungarian nobleman gave \$2,000 for a violin which was made and sold by Jacob Stainer on very singular conditions.

This nobleman, connected with the court of Charles VI., Emperor of Germany, paid Stainer sixty-six golden caroluses in cash, undertaking also to supply him with a good dinner every day, one hundred florins every month, a new suit of clothes every year, as well as two casks of beer, lodging, firing, and lighting. As Stainer lived sixteen years after the sale was consummated, it may be asserted with safety that Count Trauttmansdorff gave the highest price ever known to have been paid for a violin. It must have cost him at least 40,000 florins. More than \$3,000 has been paid for a Stradivarius; and a Joseph Guarnerius has been sold in London for \$3,150. Another "King Joseph," as his violins are called by connoisseurs, brought \$3,500.

One hundred thousand dollars has been spent for a collection of orchids; and fortunes for the filling of a "china-room" to contain collections of ceramics. The two pens used in signing the Treaty of Amiens were sold for \$2,500; and the coat worn by Charles XII. at Pultowa is said to have been sold for \$30,000.

Indulging in a "taste" for *bric-a-brac*, rare books, and manuscripts, the fine arts, or any other hobby, if it is done discreetly, may perhaps prove to be both a pleasant and profitable pursuit, as was the case when a cautious collector of ceramics sold his knickknacks, on which he had expended less than \$3,000, for \$10,000; when an American autograph hunter left nearly 100,000 specimens, for not one of which he ever paid a single penny, and for which his heirs asked \$50,000; when an English pen-maker's pictures were sold by his executors for nearly three times their cost; when a bibliomaniac disposed of his library, containing, among other curiosities, four of Wycliffe's tracts, which cost him precisely four shillings, for \$2,000; or when a collector of relics parted with his gleanings of two-score years, and mostly gathered without cost, for some \$20,000. But if a "taste" be indulged in without judgment, it is very certain to prove an exceedingly expensive luxury, as—to give a single instance—in the case of Boydell, who hopelessly ruined himself by illustrating Shakespeare at a cost of nearly \$2,000,000!

Charles Dickens commissioned Frith to paint, for the sum of \$100, the picture of Dolly Varden. At the sale of the great novelist's collection this work brought \$5,300; and some articles of *bric-a-brac*, which cost Dickens \$3,000, brought nearly \$50,000.

W. G. J.

ROMANCE OF SPANISH ARTISTS.

AMONG Spanish painters there is no dearer name than that of Murillo. He was a true knight of art, consecrated soul and body to the divine gift. For him all created beings had a sacredness in his eyes, and he painted the wretched beggar in the meanest hovel with the same love as if she were a queen of heaven. Like Fra Angelico, he went to his palette from prayer. He married at twenty-seven a young Spanish beauty, and he proved to be as good a husband as he was great a painter. The "Virgins" of his pictures are all gracious and tender creatures, and he was never known to paint the figure of a nude woman. His genius had a chasteness in keeping with his piety. Once, when asked why he did not finish certain pictures, he replied, "I await, inspired, that which Christ shall come to tell me." His life was a tranquil one, beautified with noble deeds and marked generosity. He died, full of love and honor, at the age of ninety-one.

Velasquez, whom no painter has ever equalled as a naturalist, seems to have enjoyed a complete life. He had an air so distinguished that one fancied him a born prince. His face and manner were most winning; he dressed in a style the most tasteful and *recherché*, and his manners were most noble. He married Juana, a daughter of the painter Pacheco, a man of rare talent; whose child

was worthy of her father. The endearment of their union may be inferred from the fact that she died seven days after Velasquez—a victim to insupportable grief. Rich in incidents as was the life of this artist, no one of them is of a more interesting nature than his relations with his slave, Juan de Pareja. There were many slaves in Seville at that time, and it is not known whether Pareja was one of inheritance or purchase. Velasquez employed him in his studio to mix his colors, clean his brushes, and prepare his canvas. He was of extreme intelligence, and his first work in painting was done in secret, in hours when he was unemployed by his master. One day Philip IV., seeing a picture which greatly pleased him, asked who painted it. He was shown the slave-painter, who fell on his knees before the sovereign in the presence of Velasquez. "He who has so much merit cannot be a slave," said Philip, and Velasquez, who was the soul of generosity, gave Pareja his freedom on the spot, and taking him for his pupil, took him with him in his voyages into Italy. He remained with his master until his death, which occurred in his sixty-first year. Pareja then passed the remainder of his days with Iona Velasquez, who had married Martinez del Mazo, the eminent landscapist. His death took place in 1670, at the age of sixty-four.

Luis de Morales, surnamed "*El Divino*," because he only painted sacred subjects, lived royally the first half of his life, but, losing his fortune and his eyesight, he died in the most complete misery, leaving a son.

Isidore Arredondo, the historical painter, resolved to lead a bachelor's life, and, to keep his heart warm, adopted a little Spanish girl, to whom he stood in the relation of guardian, and afterwards married her.

Alphonse Cairo, who was a sort of Spanish Michael Angelo for genius, and fought duels, was suspected of murdering his wife and was put to the torture. He, however, kept his lips sealed, and he survived the rack of confession. The truth was never known. The event increased his reputation, and he had a most successful career.

Fernando Navarrete, grand as an historical painter, became deaf and dumb at thirteen years of age, which never seemed, however, to modify his talent for painting. He never married, but led a gay and cheerful life and was much beloved by his friends. "His mother, who was beautiful, served as his models for angels and "Virgins," and his father was painted for apostles, as he had great taste for biblical subjects. So great was his talent and versatility that he was called the Titian of Spain.

MARY W.

WHY AMERICAN ART LANGUISHES.

A LEADING American artist was asked why he confined himself to portraits, small pictures, and foreign ideas, instead of undertaking something that would really make a sensation in art circles—some big American subject that would be worthy of his talent. He replied that he would do so gladly if he could, but he could not afford it. To paint such a picture would cost, allowing himself carpenter's wages, from \$1,200 to \$2,000. Models must be hired, researches undertaken, and costly material purchased. Then, when it was done, the chances were, he thought, that every one would admire it and no one buy it. This would mean the loss of a year's time and considerable money, which he could not afford. On the other hand, the wealthy artists are not spurred on by necessity. They either don't have to paint at all or their reputation brings a ready sale for anything whatever which they wish to paint. He averred that every painting of the kind of recent years has been either painted to order or with a tacit understanding that some patron was to see the artist through. There is no stimulus to original American art except the few rewards offered by art associations, which are almost universally carried off by Salon pictures or pictures with foreign treatment. This artist referred to has a great picture that he wants to paint. He cannot do it unless some man of wealth stands sponsor for it. To do so without aid or encouragement would be as reasonable as for a Market-street merchant to embark all his goods on a sailing vessel and take a voyage to the cannibal islands in the hope of a lucrative trade. Artists without capital or patrons won't undertake big work. Artists with capital and reputation have no reason to. Why don't some of our wealthy men undertake to encourage art by agreeing to stand sponsor to some of our rising artists? The Government fosters art in France. Here the Government ruins it; for once in a while it buys a bad picture at an enormous price and is so overcome with its virtuous action that it has to rest several years before trying again.—*Philadelphia Inquirer*.